

CITY OF CLEWISTON
PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD
Regular Meeting
October 5, 2009

Mr. Hughes called a regular meeting of the Clewiston Planning and Zoning Board to order at 5:30 p.m., in the Commission Chambers at City Hall, 115 West Ventura Avenue.

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present: Lewell Hughes
Ramon Iglesias
Jack Webb
Sassy Whitehead

Members Absent: Leroy Hare, Sr.

City Personnel Present: Bo Pelham, Fire Marshal
Travis Reese, Director of Building & Zoning
Debbi Towner, Planning Assistant
Jim Watt, City Attorney

Visitors Present: Gary L. Sapp
Aaron Sills
Michael S. Turner

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Iglesias made a motion, seconded by Ms. Whitehead to approve the amended minutes of the August 3, 2009 meeting. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

A variance request by Clewiston Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, Inc., Block 424, Lots 1 - 3, GPOC, Zoned RM-1.

Mr. Reese read the staff summary stating that the property, located at the corner of West El Paso Avenue and W.C. Owen, is in a RM-1 mobile home residential district; therefore the side setback on the corner side (W.C. Owen) is 25 feet. The proposed addition will encroach 13.5 feet into the setback leaving the building only 11.5 from the property line. The applicant has applied for three (3) requests: reduction of the side setback, reduction of required parking spaces and the paving of the parking spaces.

Mr. Sills stated that the church has existed since 1959 with renovations done in 1973. Their plan is to not only build ADA compliant bathrooms but to beautify the property with landscaping that meets or exceeds the City of Clewiston's landscaping code. Their plan is to have one (1) handicap parking space which will be paved. The rest of the spaces will be grass. They are a small congregation with limited funds for improvement; their budget does not include paving of the parking spaces.

Mr. Iglesias asked about the possibility of purchasing the lots directly to the north of the property. Mr. Sills said that they are actively pursuing a purchase and that the current owner is interested in selling. These lots would be used for expanding the parking in the future.

Ms. Whitehead asked about the possibility of the W.C. Owen right-of-way ever being extended. Mr. Reese stated that there is no room for expansion of the right-of-way along W.C. Owen.

Mr. Reese stated that of the three requests the board must find that a hardship exists of each request; reduction of the side setback, reduction of required parking spaces and the paving of the parking spaces.

Mr. Watt asked about the hardship for the requests being presented. He informed the board that the paving the parking spaces is not a hardship if it is self imposed condition; therefore lack of funds on the part of the applicant does not appear to meet the requirements for a hardship however the request for the reduction of side setback and reduction of number of parking spaces could be considered.

Mr. Webb was concerned about setting a precedence concerning multiple requests on one (1) application. He stated that he, in good conscience, could not vote in favor.

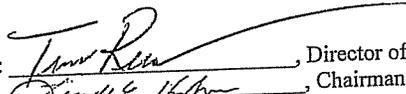
Mr. Sills stated he is withdrawing the request to use a grass parking lot and only asking the board to consider reducing the west side setback to (11.5') eleven feet six inches and parking reduce the required parking from (19) nineteen to (10) ten spaces.

There were fourteen (14) letters from neighbors, all with no objections to the request.

Mr. Iglesias made a motion to approve the variance application as presented, seconded by Ms. Whitehead. Motion passed by a 3-1 on a voice vote with Mr. Webb voting nay.

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Iglesias, seconded by Ms. Whitehead, at 6:01 p.m.

Submitted by:  Director of Building & Zoning
Approved by:  Chairman